WHERE THERE'S A WILL

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ILLUSTRATED BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

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SYNOPSIS.

Minnie, spring-house girl at Hope sanatorium, tells the story. It opens with the arrival of Miss Patty Jennings, who is reported to be engaged to marry a prince, and the death of the old doctor who owns the sanatorium. The estate is left to a scapegrace grandson, Dicky Carter, who must appear on a certain date and run the sanatorium successfully for two months or forfeit the inheritance. A case of mumps delays Dick's arrival. Mr. Thoburn is hovering about in hopes of securing the place for a summer hotel. Pierce, a college man in hard luck, is prevailed upon by Van Alstyne, Dick's brother-in-law, to impersonate the missing heir and take charge of the sanatorium until Carter arrives. Dick, who has eloped with Patty's younger sister, Dorothy, arrives, and the couple go into hiding in the old shelter house. Fearing to face Dorothy's father, who is at the sanatorium, Dick arranges with Pierce to continue in the management of the property. Julia Summers, leading lady of Pierce's stranded theatrical company, arrives. She is suing Dicky for breach of promise. The prince, under the incognito of Oskar von Inwald, arrives at the sanatorium. Barnes, character man with Pierce's show and a graduate M. D., takes the place of sanatorium physician. Pierce, who is very much interested in Patty, shows a strong dislike for Inwald. Dick becomes peevish over the independent manner in which Pierce is running the sanatorium. Miss Summers discovers that the Dick Carter she is seeking is the owner of the sanatorium. Dick, in attempting to steal his love letters from Miss Summers, breaks into the wrong room and gets the wrong letters. Miss Summers' dog has convulsions from overeating. The patients believe it has been poisoned by the doped spring water.

CHAPTER X.—Continued.

He staggered out, with Mr. Biggs just behind him, and from that moment they were all demoralized. One by one they left to look for Doctor Barnes, or to get the white of egg, which somebody had suggested as an antidote.

I was alone, looking down at Arabella. Or rather, I thought I was alone, for there was a movement by one of the windows and Miss Patty came forward and knelt by the dog.

"Of all the absurdities!" she said. "Poor little thing! Minnie, I believe she's breathing!"

She put the dog's head in her lap, and the little beast opened its eyes and tried to wag its blue tail.

"Oh, Miss Patty, Miss Patty!" I exclaimed, and I got down beside her and cried on her shoulder, with her stroking my hand and calling me dearest! Me!

I was wiping my eyes when the door was thrown open and Mr. Pierce ran in. He had no hat on and his hair was powdered with snow. He stopped just inside the door and looked at Miss Patty.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "I thought you were poisoned!"

"I am all right," she assured him, "and little Arabella will be all right, too. She's had a convulsion, that's all—probably from overeating. As for the others—!"

"Where is the—where is von Inwald?"

"He has gone to take the white of an egg," she replied rather haughtily.

He walked to the window and I saw him looking hard at something outside in the snow. When he walked back to the fire he was smiling, and he stooped over and poked Arabella with his finger.

"So that was it!" he said. "Full to the scuppers, poor little wretch! Minnie, I am hoist with my own petard, which in this case was a boomerang."

"Which is in English—" I asked.

"With the instinct of her sex, Arabella has unearthed what was meant to be buried forever. She had gorged herself into a convulsion on that rabbit I shot last night!"

They went to the house together, he carrying Arabella like a sick baby and

They Were All Demoralized.

Miss Patty beside him. I went over and looked down into the spring, and it seemed to me it was darker than usual. It may have smelled stronger, but the edge had been taken off my nose, so to speak, by being there so long.

The only thing I could think of was to empty the spring and let the water come in plain. I could put a little sulphur in to give it color and flavor, and if it turned out that Mr. Pierce was right and that Arabella was only a glutton, I could put in the other things later.

I was carrying out my first pailful when Doctor Barnes came down the path and took the pail out of my hand.

"What are you doing?" he asked. "Making a slide?"

"No," I said bitterly, "I am watering the flowers."

"Good!" He was not a bit put out. "Let me help you." Inside, he put down the pail, and pulling me in, closed the door.

"Now forget it!" he commanded. "Just because a lot of damn fools see a dog in a fit and have one, too, is that any reason for your being scared wall-eyed and knock-kneed? Lord, I wish you could have seen them staggering into my office!"

"I saw enough," I said with a shiver.

"That German, von Inwald," he went on, "he's the limit. He accused us of poisoning him for reasons of state!"

"Where are they now?"

"My dear girl," he answered, putting down his glass, "what has been pounded into me ever since I struck the place? The baths! I prescribe 'em all day and dream 'em all night. Where are the poisonees now? They are steaming, stewing, exuding in the hot rooms of the bath department—all of them, every one of them! In the hold and the hatches down!"

Just then somebody fell aginst the door and stumbled into the room. It was Tillie, as white as milk, and breathing in gasps.

"Quick!" she screeched, "Minnie, quick!"

"What is it?" I asked, jumping up. She'd fallen back against the door frame and stood with her hand clutching her heart.

"That dev—devil—Mike!" she panted. "He has turned on the steam in the men's bath and gone—gone away!"

"With people in the bath?" Doctor Barnes asked, slamming down the pail.

Tillie nodded.

"Then why in creation don't they get out of the baths until we can shut off the steam?" I demanded, grabbing up my shawl. But Tillie shook her head in despair.

"They can't," she answered, "he's hid their clothes!"

The next thing I recall is running like mad up the walk with Doctor Barnes beside me, steadying me by the arm. I only spoke once that I remember and that was just as we got to the house.

"That settles it!" I panted, desperately. "It's all over."

"Not a bit of it!" he said, shoving me up the steps and into the hall. "The old teakettle is just getting 'het up' a bit. By the gods and little fishes, just listen to it singing down there!"

* * * * * * *

The help was gathered in a crowd at the head of the bathhouse staircase, where a cloud of steam was coming up, and down below we could hear furious talking, and somebody shouting, "Mike! Mike!" in a voice that was choked with rage and steam.

"Clothes! Send us some clothes!"

It was Mr. Sam calling. The rest was swallowed up in a fresh roaring, as if a steam pipe had given away. That settled the people below. With a burst of fury they swarmed up the stairs in their bath sheets, the bishop leading, and just behind him, talking as no gentleman should talk under any circumstances, Senator Biggs. The rest followed, their red faces shining through the steam—all of them murderous, holding their sheets around them with one hand, and waving the other in frenzy. It was awful.

The help scattered and ran, but I stood my ground. The sight of a man in a sheet didn't scare me and it was not time for weakness. A moment later the engineer came up and after him Mr. Pierce, with a towel over his mouth and a screw-driver in his hand. He was white with rage.

"Who saw Mike last?" he shouted.

Here Mr. Moody, who's small at any time, and who without the padding on his shoulders and wrapped in a sheet with a red face above, looked like a lighted cigarette, darted out of the crowd and caught him by the sleeve.

"Here!" he cried, "we've got a few things to say to you, you young—"

"Take your hand off my arms!" thundered Mr. Pierce.

The storm broke with that. They crowded around Mr. Pierce, yelling like maniacs, and he stood there, white-faced, and let them wear themselves out. The courage of a man in a den of lions was nothing to it. Doctor Barnes forced his way through the crowd and stood there beside him.

And I stood there and watched, my mind awhirl, expecting every minute to hear that they were all leaving, or to have some one forget and shake both fists at once.

And that's how it ended finally—I mean, of course, that they said they would all leave immediately, and that he ought to be glad to have them go quietly, and not have him jailed for malicious mischief or compounding a felony. The whole thing was an outrage, and the three train would leave the house as empty as a squeezed lemon.

"At three o'clock, then," said Mr. Pierce. "Very well."

"Don't be a fool!" I heard Mr. Sam from the crowd.

"Is that all you have to say?" roared Mr. von Inwald. "Haven't you any apology to make, sir?"

"Neither apology nor explanation to you," Mr. Pierce retorted. And to the other: "It is an unfortunate accident—incident, if you prefer." He looked at Thoburn, who was the only one in a bathrobe, and who was the only cheerful one in the lot. "I had refused a request of the bath man's and he has taken this form of revenge. If this gives me the responsibility I am willing to take it. If you expect me to ask you to stay I'll not do it. I don't mind saying that I am as tired of all this as you are. In fact, I'd about decided on a new order of things for this place anyhow. It's going to be a real health resort, run for people who want to get well or keep well. People who wish to be overfed, overheated and coddled need not come—or stay."

The bishop spoke over the heads of the others, who looked dazed.

"Does that mean," he inquired mild-

"We've Got a Few Things to Say to You."

ly, "that—guests must either obey this order of things or go away?"

Mr. Pierce looked at the bishop and smiled.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said, "but as every one is leaving, anyhow—"

They fairly jumped at him then. They surrounded him in a howling mob and demanded how he dared to turn them out, and what did he mean by saying they were overfed, and they would leave when they were good and ready and not before, and he could go to blazes. It was the most scandalous thing I've ever known of at Hope Springs, and in the midst of it Mr. Pierce stood cool and quiet, waiting for a chance to speak. And when the time came he jumped in and told them the truth about themselves, and most of it hurt. He was good and mad, and he stood there and picked out the flabby ones and the fat ones, the whisky livers and the tobacco hearts and the banquet stomachs, and called them out by name. He got through and stood looking at them in their sheets, and then he said coolly:

"The bus will be ready at two-thirty, gentlemen," and turning on his heels, went into the office and closed the door.

They scattered to their rooms in every stage of rage and excitement, and at last only Mr. Sam and I were left staring at each other. "Damned young idiot!" he said. "I wish to heavens you'd never suggested bringing him here, Minnie!"

And leaving me speechless with indignation, he trailed himself and his sheet up the stairs.

CHAPTER XI.

I couldn't stand any more. It was all over! I rushed to my room and threw myself on the bed. At two-thirty I heard the bus come to the porte-cochere under my window and then drive away; that was the last straw. I put a pillow over my head so nobody could hear me, and then and there I had hysterics.

And then somebody jerked the pillow away and I looked up, with my eyes swollen almost shut, and it was Doctor Barnes. He had a glass of water in his hand and he held it right above me.

"One more yell," he said, "and it goes over you!"

I sat up and stared at him. I could hardly see out of my eyes. He had his back to the light, but I could tell that he had a cross of adhesive plaster on his cheek and that one eye was almost shut. He smiled when he saw my expression.

"It's the temperament," he said. "It goes with the hair. I've got it too, only I'm apt to go out and pick a fight at such times, and a woman hasn't got that outlet. As you see, I found Mike, and my disfigurement is to Mike's as starlight to the noonday glare. Come and take a walk."

I didn't want to go, but anything was better than sitting in the room moping. I put on my jacket and Miss Patty's chinchillas, which cheered me a little, but as we went downstairs the quiet of the place sat on my chest like a weight.

"The Jenningses are still here," said the doctor. "The old man is madder than any hornet ever dared be, and they go in the morning. But the situation was too much for our German friend. He left with the others."

Well, we went out and I took the path I knew best, which was out toward the springhouse. At the little bridge over the creek Doctor Barnes stopped, and leaning over the rail, took a good look at me.

"When you self-contained women go to pieces," he said, "you pretty near smash, don't you? You look as if you'd had a death in your family."

"This was my family," I half sniveled.

"But," he said, "you'll be getting married and having a home of your own and forgetting all about this."

He looked at me with his sharp eyes. "There's probably some nice chap in the village, eh?"

"Look here," I turned on him, "if you're talking all this nonsense to keep my mind off things, you needn't."

"I'm not," he said. "I'm asking for the sake of my own mind, but we'll not bother about that now. We'd better start back."

We went back to the house and I straightened the news stand, Amanda King having taken a violent toothache as a result of the excitement. The Jenningses were packing to go, and Miss Summers had got a bottle of peroxide and shut herself in her room. At six o'clock Tillie beckoned to me from the door of the officers' dining room and said she'd put the basket in the snow by the grape arbor. I got ready, with a heavy heart, to take it out. I had forgotten all about their dinner, for one thing, and I had to carry bad news.

But Mr. Pierce had been there before me. I saw tracks in the fresh snow, for, praise heaven! it had snowed all that week and our prints were filled up almost as fast as we made them. When I got to the shelter-house it was in a wild state of excitement. Mrs. Dick, with her cheeks flushed, had gathered all her things on the cot and was rolling them up in sheets and newspapers. But Mr. Dick was sitting on the box in front of the fire with his curly hair standing every way. He had been roasting potatoes, and as I opened the door, he picked one up and poked at it to see if it was done.

"Damn!" he said, and dropped it.

Mrs. Dick sat on the cot rolling up a pink ribbon and looked at him.

"If you want to know exactly my reason for insisting on moving tonight, I'll tell you," she said, paying no attention to me. "It is your disposition."

He didn't say anything, but he put his foot on the potato and smashed it.

"If I had to be shut in here with you one more day," she went on, "I'd hate you."

"Why the one more day?" he asked, without looking up.

But she didn't answer him. She was in the worst kind of a temper; she threw the ribbon down, and coming over, lifted the lid of my basket and looked in.

"Ham again!" she exclaimed ungratefully. "Thanks so much for remembering us, Minnie. I dare say our dinner today slipped your mind!"

"I wonder if it strikes you, Minnie," Mr. Dick said, noticing me for the first time, "that if you and Sam hadn't been so confounded meddling, that fellow Pierce would be washing buggies in the village livery stable where he belongs, and I'd be in one piece of property that's as good as gone this minute."

I was in a bad humor, anyhow, and I'd had enough. I stood just inside the door and I told them I'd done the best I could, not for them, but because I'd promised the old doctor, and if I'd made mistakes I'd answer for them to him if I ever met him in the next world. And in the meantime I washed my hands of the whole thing, and they might make out as best they could. I was going.

Mrs. Dick heard me through. Then she came over and put her hand on mine where it lay on the table.

"You're perfectly right," she said. "I know how you have tried, and that the fault is all that wretched Pierce's. You mustn't mind Mr. Carter, Minnie. He's been in that sort of humor all day."

He looked at her with the most miserable face I ever saw, but he didn't say anything. She sighed, the little wretch.

I plodded back with my empty basket. I had only one clear thought—that I wouldn't have any more tramping across the golf links in the snow. I wanted to get back to my room and go to bed and forget.

But as I came near the house I saw Mr. Pierce come out on the front piazza and switch on the lights. He stood there looking out into the snow, and the next minute I saw why. Coming up the hill and across the lawn was a shadowy line of people, black against the white. I thought for a minute that my brain had gone wrong; then the first figure came into the light, and it was the bishop. He stood at the front of the steps and looked up at Mr. Pierce.

"I dare say," he said, trying to look easy, "that this is sooner than you expected us!"

Mr. Pierce looked down at the crowd. Then he smiled, a growing smile that ended in a grin.

"On the contrary," he said, "I've been expecting you for an hour or more."

The procession began to move gloomily up the steps. All of them carried hand luggage, and they looked tired and sheepish. Miss Cobb stopped in front of Mr. Pierce.

"Do you mean to say," she demanded furiously, "that you knew the railroad was blocked with snow, and yet you let us go!"

"On the contrary, Miss Cobb," he said politely, "I remember distinctly regretting that you insisted on going. Besides, there was the Sherman house."

Senator Briggs stopped in front of him. "Probably you also knew that that was full, including the stables, with people from the stalled trains," he asserted furiously.

Two by two they went in and through the hall, stamping the snow off, and up to their old rooms again, leaving Slocum, the clerk, staring at them as if he couldn't believe his eyes.

Mr. Pierce and I watched from the piazza, through the glass.

We saw Doctor Barnes stop and look, and then go and hang over the news stand and laugh himself almost purple, and we saw Mr. Thoburn bringing up the tail of the procession and trying to look unconcerned. I am not a revengeful woman, but that was one of the happiest moments of my life.

We gave them a good supper and Mr. Pierce ordered claret served without extra charge. By eight o'clock they were all in better humor, and when they'd gathered in the lobby Miss Summers gave an imitation of Marie Dressler doing the Salome dance. With the exception of Mr. von Inwald, not one of them really wanted to go.

At eleven o'clock we had the clambake with beer in the kitchen, and Mr. von Inwald came, after all. They were really very cheerful, all of them. At the end, when everybody was happy and everything forgiven, Mr. Pierce got up and made a speech.

He said he was sorry for what had happened that day, but that much he had said he still maintained; that to pretend to make people well in the way most sanatoriums did it was sheer folly, and he felt his responsibility too keenly to countenance a system that was clearly wrong and that the best modern thought considered obsolete.

Miss Cobb sat up at that; she is always talking about the best modern thought.

He said that perfect health, clear skins, bright eyes—he looked at the women, and except for Miss Patty, there wasn't an honest complexion or a bright eye in the lot—keen appetites and joy of living all depended on rational and simple living. It was being done now in a thousand fresh-air farms, and succeeding. Men went back to their business clear-headed and women grew more beautiful.

At that, what with the reaction from sitting in the cold station, and the beer and everything, they all grew enthusiastic. Doctor Barnes made a speech telling that he used to be puny and weak, and how he went into training and became a pugilist, and how he'd fought the Tennessee something or other—the men nodded as if they knew—and licked him in 40 seconds or 40 rounds, I'm not sure which. The men were standing on their chairs

"I've Put Myself on Trial and Been Convicted."

cheering for him, and even Mr. Jennings, who'd been sitting and not saying much, said he thought probably there was something in it.

They ended by agreeing to try it out for a week, beginning with the morning, when everybody was to be down for breakfast by seven-thirty. Then somebody suggested that if they were to get up they'd have to go to bed, and the party broke up.

In a half-hour or so I had cleared away, and I went out to the lobby to lock up the news stand. Just as I opened the door from the back hall, however, I heard two people talking.

It was Miss Pat and Mr. Pierce. She was on the stairs and he in the hall below, looking up.

"I don't want to stay!" she was saying.

"But, don't you see," he argued. "If you go, the others will. Can't you try it for a week? I'm told it's the bad season and nobody else would come until Lent. And, anyhow, it's not business to let a lot of people go away mad. It gives the place a black eye."

"Dear me," she said, "how businesslike you are growing!"

He went over close to the stairs and dropped his voice.

"If you want the bitter truth," he went on, trying to smile, "I've put myself on trial and been convicted of being a fool and a failure. I've been going around so long trying to find a place that I fit into, that I'm scarred as with many battles. And now I'm on probation—for the last time. If this doesn't go, I—I—"

"What?" she asked, leaning down to him. "You'll not—"

"Oh, no," he said, "nothing dramatic, of course. I could go around the country in a buggy selling lightning rods—"

She drew herself back as if she resented his refusal of her sympathy.

"Or open a saloon in the Philippines!" he finished mockingly. "There's a living in that."

"You are impossible," she said, and turned away.

He watched her up the stairs and then turned and walked to the fire, with his hands in his pockets and his head down.

I closed the news stand and he came over just as I was hanging up the cigar case key for Amanda King in the morning. He reached up and took the key off its nail.

"I'll keep that," he said. "It's no tobacco after this, Minnie."

"You can't keep them here, then," I retorted. "They've got to smoke; it's the only work they do."

"We'll see," he said quietly. "And—oh, yes, Minnie, now that we shall not be using the mineral spring—"

"Not use the mineral spring!" I repeated, stupefied.

"Certainly not!" he said. "This is a drugless sanatorium, Minnie, from now on. That's part of the theory—no drugs. Listen, Minnie. If you hadn't been wasting your abilities in the mineral spring, I'd be sorry to close it. But there will be plenty for you to do."

"If we're not going to use the springhouse, we might have saved the expense of the new roof in the fall," I said bitterly.

"Not at all. For two hours or so a day the springhouse will be a rest-house—windows wide open and God's good air penetrating to fastnesses it never knew before."

"The spring will freeze!"

"Exactly. My only regret is that it is too small to skate on. But they'll have the ice pond."

"When I see Mr. Moody skating on the ice pond," I said sarcastically, "I'll see Mrs. Moody dead with the shock on the bank."

"Not at all," re replied calmly. "You'll see her skating, too." And with that he went to bed.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

His Knowledge of Jungle Noises.

They were sitting in a booth at a well-known New York cafe, and conversation had turned upon the subject of mysterious midnight noises. Each in turn related some little anecdote, when a spare young man in the corner suddenly rose to his feet.

"Gentlemen," said he, "your experiences are very interesting; but for real awe give me the roaring of the lion or sharp trumpeting of an elephant borne to you on the still night air as you lie silent, neither asleep nor awake."

They stared at him in surprise. Was this pale youth, then, some great traveler?

"Excuse me," one asked, "but have you slept in the jungle and heard these mighty beasts as they roamed about by night?"

"Well, it's not exactly that," replied the youth, reaching for his hat, "but I always sleep with my window open, and I live in Fifth avenue, directly opposite the Central Park Zoo!"—New York World.

Peculiarity of Cast Iron.

Singularly enough, cast iron, never considered very strong, and thought by most people to be far less durable than steel, improves greatly in strength when subjected to constant shocks. This was proved by guns of various ages and service. Guns tried a month after casting burst at the seventieth or eightieth discharge. Other guns, which had been in use for six years, failed to burst after 2,000 or 3,000 discharges, and cast iron bars, after being subjected to shocks, frequently gain 100 per cent. in strength. But, in all cases, the cast iron which proved strongest was cast iron which had had "a holiday" in between the hard work.